

**SOLICITATION NOTICE FOR  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OR CONTINUATION OF  
TRIBAL INDOOR RADON PROGRAM GRANTS**

1) *What is the purpose of this solicitation notice?*

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) was mandated by Congress under Title III of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), also known as the Indoor Radon Abatement Act of 1988 (IRAA), to fund State and Tribal Agencies to provide education, outreach and encourage testing and mitigation for indoor radon exposures, so that indoor exposures to radon may be eventually reduced to no greater than outdoor exposures. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number is 66.032. The purpose of this solicitation notice for Tribal Indoor Radon Program Grants is to achieve USEPA's objective (under the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA)) that by the year 2005, 15 million more Americans will live or work in homes, schools, or office buildings with healthier indoor air than in 1994.

2) *How much money is available?*

USEPA Region 5 has up to a total of **\$211,715** available to award grants deemed appropriate to fund Tribal Radon Programs in Region 5. Grant requests should be no less than \$25,000 and no more than \$75,000. The USEPA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and not award any of these funds under this solicitation that do not meet any of the requirements of this solicitation or due to any other needs for the government's convenience.

3) *What is Radon and how does it relate to homes, schools, and office buildings?*

In the last several years, a growing body of scientific evidence shows that air within buildings can be more seriously polluted than outdoor air. People spend as much as 90% of their time indoors. Thus, for many people the risks to health may be greater due to exposure to air pollution indoors than outdoors. Radon comes from the natural (radioactive) breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. Radon can be found all over the U.S. It can get into any type of building - homes, offices, and schools - and result in a high indoor radon level.

The U.S. Congress has set a long-term goal that indoor radon levels be no more than outdoor levels; about 0.4 pCi/L of radon is normally found in the outside air. EPA recommends fixing your home if the results one *long-term* test or the average of two *short-term* tests show radon levels of 4 pCi/L (or 0.02 WL) or higher. With today's technology, radon levels in most homes can be reduced to 2 pCi/L or below.

Additional information on radon and the radon program may be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon>. No other pre-application programmatic assistance will be available.

4) *When are the proposals and pre-applications due and when will EPA announce the grant awards?*

Proposals and pre-applications are due to the USEPA Region 5 Offices no later than Close of Business Friday, May 7, 2004. Proposals and pre-applications postmarked after May 7, 2004, may not be considered, and any unobligated funding will be released for use by States or other Tribal Programs. All applicants will be notified within 60 days

whether they are chosen or not. Faxed or e-mailed proposals and pre-applications will be accepted with prior USEPA notification and approval with a postmark on signed hard copies no later than May 7, 2004.

- 5) *Where do applicants request and send their forms?*

Applicants must mail their proposals forms to the following address:

**ATTENTION: Tribal Radon Grants**  
**Attention: Regional Radon Coordinator**  
**USEPA Region 5**  
**Integrated Air Toxics Section**  
**77 West Jackson Boulevard (AT-18J)**  
**Chicago, Illinois 60604**

**Information: Radon Program**  
**(312) 886-6026**

All Forms may be requested at the above address or accessed on the internet at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm> or at  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants\\_forms.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_forms.html).

- 6) *What is a pre-application?*

The pre-application contains three parts: 1) the "Application for Federal Assistance" (Standard Form 424 (or SF 424, attached), 2) the "Budget Information: Non-Construction Programs" (Standard Form 424A (or SF 424A, attached), and 3) a work plan (described below). To ensure your pre-application is completed properly, carefully follow the instructions on the SF 424, SF 424A, and those provided below. The SF 424, SF 424A, and the completed work plan contains all the information USEPA will use to evaluate the merits of your pre-application. Only finalists will be asked to submit all of the additional forms needed to complete the grant application process.

- 7) *Who is eligible to submit a pre-application?*

Only Federally recognized Indian tribes in Region 5 and their environmental or health agencies, are eligible to apply. (Please see number 7 on the SF 424 form)

- 8) *May an organization submit more than one pre-application at a time?*

No. An organization may submit one pre-application, but may amend their pre-application for additional funding for additional projects; additional project funding will be considered as budget and remaining funding allows. No organization will be awarded more than one grant for the same project during the same fiscal year.

- 9) *May an organization submit a pre-application even if it was awarded funding under this program in the past?*

Yes. Applicants who were awarded funding previously may submit a pre-application. Each pre-application will be evaluated based upon the specific criteria set forth in this solicitation and in relation to the other pre-applications.

- 10) *May an individual apply for a grant (faculty member, facilities manager, superintendent etc.)?*

Only Federally recognized Tribes in Region 5 or their agencies, organizations, and institutions--not individuals--are eligible to apply for grants.

- 11) *What projects are eligible for funding?*

Projects eligible for funding include (but are not limited to) educational and training workshops designed to assist target audience on how to minimize radon exposures in the indoor environments in their buildings; Schools testing programs; residential testing programs; radon mitigation demonstration projects (these are very limits and have restrictions that must be met); and informational presentations to the public at any type of health fair or speaker requested presentation.

- 12) *What specific criteria must be met?*

**Responders must meet the bullet-listed criteria and are encouraged to meet as many of the additional recommended areas of concern following this listing as possible within the proposal. Proposals must address how the project...**

- promotes radon-resistant new construction,
- encourages testing and mitigation in conjunction with real estate transactions,
- plans and/or promotes school testing and mitigation, where necessary,
- develops and/or coordinates multimedia mitigation programs with other programs or State Agencies, as appropriate,
- sets environmental radon goals that will be met during the grant project period, and
- promotes and/or develops State, Tribal, and/or local indoor air coalitions

Additionally, the Region 5 Tribes are encouraged to target efforts and resources toward high-risk areas and populations. The USEPA recommends that Tribes pursue partnerships with other agencies and organizations, e.g. local health departments, State and local environmental agencies, American Lung Associations, and American Cancer Societies.

Tribal radon programs particularly are encouraged to collaborate with their indoor air quality governmental colleagues to further achieve radon risk reduction. U.S. EPA recommends promoting the "Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Action Kit" -- a practical guide for preventing and resolving indoor air problems at little or no cost, using common-sense activities and in-house staff -- as an area of joint radon/indoor air quality activity.

Under new requirements to provide quality data, it is now required that a quality management plan (QMP) for the State Indoor Radon Grant (SIRG) program must be in development to be approved, or currently be approved. For Tribal radon projects, a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) may be adequate to meet this requirement. This QMP or QAPP will need to be submitted and approved by the Radiation Quality Assurance Coordinator and the appropriate Regional Quality Assurance staff within 90 days of awarding of any funding for this program. Other information on Quality Assurance Programs for USEPA grants or programs may be found and downloaded at: <http://www.epa.gov/quality/>.

Any information that the Federally Recognized Tribes in Region 5 submits, including pre-applications and proposals, will be considered publicly available, unless clearly marked or indicated that the information is Confidential Business Information or is to be considered as proprietary information. USEPA will review this information and determine the applicability of the assertions following regulations at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B. Also, all information must be available in electronic format to be able to be sent via e-mail to USEPA on request.

13) *Are matching funds required?*

Yes. A minimum match of 5 percent is required, however, this match requirement may be waived, if it is requested and the need is demonstrated. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs. In the case of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. The proposed match, including the value of in-kind contributions must be carefully documented. All grants are subject to audit and must meet all Federal requirement for assistance programs, including Executive Order 123722, as applicable..

14) *Can the applicant request funding for any budget category on the SF 424A (i.e., personnel/salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, and indirect charges)?*

Yes. The applicant may request funding for any or all of the budget categories identified above with the following exceptions. First, USEPA will not fund the acquisition of real property (including buildings) or the construction or modification of any building. Second, the applicant may request funds to pay for salaries and fringe benefits, but only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. EPA strongly encourages applicants to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits. Third, applicants may include a request for indirect costs if their organization has already negotiated and received an indirect cost rate from the federal government.

15) *What must be included in the pre-application?*

SF 424 and SF 424A (Application for Federal Assistance and Budget Information) forms are required for all federal grants and must be submitted as part of the pre-application. These forms along with instructions and samples, are included at the end of this notice. A work plan describing the applicant's proposed project must also be submitted along with the forms. All work plans must include and be formatted according to all four sections below:

**a. Project Summary:** Provide USEPA with an overview of your entire project. The summary must be no more than two pages and must briefly include all five of the following:

- 1) Description of your organization and expertise (and key partners);
- 2) Goals and specific objectives of the project;
- 3) Demographics of your target audience (number of participants and type of individuals reached);
- 4) Marketing or promotional strategy;

5) Time-line of proposed project.

- b. Project Description:** Provide USEPA with an explanation of how your proposed project meets the criteria mentioned under #12.
- c. Project Evaluation:** Provide USEPA with an explanation of how you will determine or measure whether you are meeting the goals and objectives of your project. Evaluation plans may be quantitative and may include, for example, surveys, observation, or outside consultation.
- d. Appendices:** Provide USEPA with a detailed budget, curricula vitae/resumes of key personnel, and letters of commitment.

16) *Are there page limits for work plans?*

Initial work plans should not exceed five pages in length. Additions to or more detailed workplans may be provided at a later time.

17) *How must a pre-application be submitted?*

The applicant must submit one original and two copies of the pre-application (a signed SF424, an SF 424A, and the work plan). Please submit only the forms and work plan. Do not include other attachments such as cover letters, tables of contents, or appendices other than those required (budget, curricula vitae/resumes, letters of commitment). The SF 424 form should be the first page of your pre-application and must be signed by a person authorized to receive funds. Pre-applications must be reproducible; they should not be bound. They should be stapled or clipped once in the upper left-hand corner, on white paper, and with page numbers in the upper right. All materials need to be available to be transmitted in an electronic format, upon request.

18) *Is there a time limit for when the proposed project should be completed?*

USEPA recommends a 12-month budget and project period, starting October 1, 2004.

19) *What regulations apply to the grantee?*

Title III of TSCA, the Indoor Radon Abatement Act of 1988 (IRAA), and specifically the Indian Radon Pilot Project Act (IRPPA) under TSCA section 10, gives the USEPA broad authority to address indoor radon exposure issues, develop and disseminate information on radon and coordinate radon efforts at the federal, state, and local level. Also, USEPA's general assistance regulations at 40 CFR Part 31 applies to state, local, and Indian tribal governments and 40 CFR Part 30 applies to all other applicants such as nonprofit organizations. In addition, the applicable cost principles apply to costs incurred and work performed under these grants.

20) *Evaluation Process:* Pre-applications will be reviewed by a panel which will evaluate how applicants address each of the above mentioned criteria. Applicants' prior timeliness and completion of previous grants will also be taken into consideration, if applicable. Please include a list of previous grants with USEPA.

Three EPA Regional staff will be responsible for reviewing each proposal. The three

staff forming the Review Group for each proposal will consist of: a programmatic lead for the specific project type; another program-specific staff person; and, a Region 5 staff person outside of the specified program but familiar with the Grants Procedures. Each member of the Review Group may score up to 100 points for each proposal. These points will be calculated using the same Evaluation System, which is based on Ranking, Eligibility and Format Criteria specified below. The final score will be an average of the three scores, and then compared against similar project proposals.

21) *Final Evaluation Process - General Ranking Criteria* - Final funding decision will be made based on the following factors:

1. Description of Priority Topic Areas for Consideration-Eligibility Criteria (See Item 12) and applicant's experience with topic areas (40 points);
2. Geographic locations and extent of anticipated environmental impact of the project in the region (10 points);
3. Regional concerns, which includes recommended areas to address (20 points);
4. Cost of USEPA Region-funded portion of project compared to the relative benefit (10 points);
5. Staff Experience and Other Resource Support (including funding) (10 points);
6. Partners (letters of support from identified partners will be required at time of final grant application) (5 points);
7. Submitting application following Format Criteria outlined in Item 13 (5 points);
8. Successful completion of past USEPA Regional Program grants/cooperative agreements by applicant. This criteria only will be used to disqualify applicants that have not submitted requested information or final reports from prior year assistance agreements (prior to fiscal year 2004).

Pre-applications will be reviewed by a panel, as specified above, which will evaluate how applicants address each of the above mentioned criteria. Applicants' prior timeliness and completion of previous grants will also be taken into consideration, if applicable. Please include a list of previous grants with USEPA. USEPA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and not award the funds under this solicitation at the Government's convenience.

22) *What other requirements should the applicant be aware of?*

USEPA reserves the right to review all materials and data that apply to the grant project. If new materials become available, the grantee will be encouraged to incorporate these materials and other appropriate information related to the project as applicable. Furthermore, the grantee is required to submit quarterly and final progress reports. All information pertaining this application process needs to be available in electronic formats and able to be forwarded in an attachment to e-mails upon request. Any disputes regarding proposals or pre-applications submitted in response to this solicitation will be resolved in accordance with 40 C.F.R. Section 30.63 and 40 C.F.R. Part 31, Subpart F.